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A WOMAN'S **ENCHANTMENT**

By William Le Queux

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CHAPTER VI. GRANNY MAKES A CURIOUS RE-

QUEST. I was back in my chamber about 5 o'clock that same afternoon, seed writing a letter, when the door bell rang, and I rose and opened it.

On the threshold stood Granny

Gough.

My heart stood still for a moment.

"Hulloa! old man. Come in." I managed to say, and he followed me in with the single word "Hulloa!"

He was smartly dressed in what he called his business kit, namely, a perfect-fitting frock coat and silk hat, which he were when interviewing peowhich he wore when interviewing people on business. Like the true cosmopolitan, he hated such garb, prefering the ease of the dark fiannel lounge suit and the soft-fronted print shirt. But he had to don the shiny headgear of commerce and ceremony headgear of commerce and ceremony

"Been out on business—eh?" I askand in his eyes was an expression such as I had never seen there be-

'Yes," he replied, simply. "Yes," he replied, simply.

drink handy?"

I went to the cupboard and got out some whisky and soda. Then, when he had swallowed a stiff glass—which y the way, was quite unusual to im—he sighed, took a cigarette from he box I offered and lit it with he deliberation.

"I've been out in the country. I'm only just back," he said, volunteering the information.

the information.

I pretended not to have been round to the Cecil. I was undecided how to judge him.'

"Business, I suppose."

"Yes, he responded, emphatically. "I met Carlier, the big banker of Lyons, quite accidentally. He's at the Savoy—wants me to go to America to do some business for him."

"Well if it pays so." I said

to it just now."

"Because you're hipped, Granny.
But things will come right for you.
Roumania is not the only country
in the world where concessions are to
be picked up."

"I know that," he cried, impatiently. "But this business of Carlier's is
a big game of bluff—simply to bluff
a company in New York out of its
lawful rights and get its shares for
ourselves."

the woman I love—the woman whose future depends upon me procuring the necessary funds to make her happy." I he said, suddenly serious. "Yes, Ralston, I've been a fool. I ought to have kept the money I had. This rules last year I had, in the Credit Lyonnais, about eight thousand rounds."

Lyonnais, about eight thousand pounds
Today all the money I possess in the
world is in my pocket—about twenty
pounds. And yet—"
"Yet what?"
"And yet I have ideas—big ideas."
"I know that. Your schemes are
always colossal, just as your confounded cheek is!"
He laughed heartily. When we were He laughed heartily. When we were ogether alone he and I never mino-

together alone he and I never minoed matters.

"Yes, I suppose I've got a bigger
amount of cheek than most people. But
my dear fellow, it pays. It seems
to hypnotize people. It puts them to
sleep and I get the money I want.
They pay me for prospective concessions and advance me money for expenses in business that as men they
ought to know is rotten. Bah! Your
sharpiest business men here in your
city of London can be put to sleep
by a little hypnotism properly applied.
I don't lie—oh, dear no! I only present the facts of my various schemes
in a rosy glow of light, as it were!
And they get dazzled—and put their
hands into their pockets, always for
the benefit of Granny Gough!"

And he laughed, his great blue eyes
fixed upon me.
Could this man, so easy-going, so

fixed upon me.

Could this man, so easy-going, so careless, and yet so generous, be an assassin? No—a thousand time no!

He lit a fresh cigarette, and leaning back again in his chair, said:

"Carlyle was quite right when he said that the world was peopled mostly with fools. A clever man can just use his fellowmen to his own advantage—providing he is bold enough to face sudden danger."

"Ah! there are few men like your-

"Ah! there are few men like yourself, Granny," I remarked.
"I am a wide man—I've got big
ideas, and I can work 'em," he declared. "Perhaps my methods are
open to criticism. I quite admit that.
But you'll agree that there are few

clared. "Perhaps my methods are clared. "Perhaps my methods are open to criticism. I quite admit that. But you'll agree that there are few financiers or successful business men—those who give big sums to charities and hospitals and figure in the birthday honors—who can put their hands upon their hearts and say there have never been guilty of a bit of sharp practice."

"I quite believe you," I said. "The smy Puritanism of the great majority is a mere veneer of religious respectability, and the magistrate who fines a boy for playing pitch and toss, will, on the same day, do a deal on the stock exchange."

"My dear fellow," Gough said, "if you only knew haif the story of my adventures in search of a fortune you'd hold the world in the greatest contempt. I'll tell you what happened only a few months ago. I was in Copenhagen and a trifle hard up, when I received word that a big concession in the Adriatic had been given by the Hungarian government to a German syndicate. The latter had heard of me as a man of means and as a man who could find capital. Therefore I was approached and asked to wire' to Cologne. I wentas the big American financier—put up at the best hotel in the best suite of rooms, although I hadn't the money to pay for them. I worked the trick of a bogus telegram or two from bankers and then I met the syndicate. I invited them to meeting—ten of them—in a private room at the hotel and heard what they had to say. The moment I set eyes on them I say they would fall into my hands. They were little butchers and bakers and retired clerks—hard-headed, but

again. They came like lambs, thinking that I was about to finance them. When the whole ten of them were inside the room I locked the door, and going to the table I clamby said, "Gentlemen, the whole lot of you are in prison!" You should have seen I took the paper, and looked at it, their faces. By Joyal that were 3. their faces. By Jove! they were a study. 'Yes,' I went on, 'you've tried to induce me to finance a concession which you haven't got. The conceswhich you haven't got. The concession from the Hungarian government is not complete, and isn't worth the paper it's written upon. And you've tried to get two hundred thousand marks out of me for it. You've attempted to obtain money by false pretenses! The whole crowd were flabbergasted. Some of them, when they could speak begged me to let them off Others were inclined to be defi-

"My dear Phil, I'm always straight to a man who runs straight, as you know," he said. "But I like to get even with some of these business sharks sometimes. I love to do a bit of sharp practice and so teach them a lesson. On that day in Cologne I was in a very tight corner for money. You can't play the American financier without cost—you know. You recollect how I got that big order from the Russian government to buy Childean and Argentine warships during the Japanese war. I posed in Petersburg as a millionaire, and through a lady's influence got in touch with the admiralty. I sold them four ships secretly paid the lady fifty thousand francs for her services as my secret agent and made a pot myself."

"And you've lost it all—already—Interest of the services as my secret agent and made a pot myself."

"And you've lost it all-already-

"Yes—every red cent," he laughed.
"I invested ten thousand pounds to
provide for little Gertie. That's intact, I'm glad to say, so she'll never
want."

mantic.

We were silent for a few moments, the Crimson London sundown flooding the room. My thoughts had reverted to that mysterious tragedy in Redeliffe Gardens, and suddenly, I said—

"Granny, you recollect that woman who joined Garshore at the Cecil last migtaken her.

"Why? Why should I mistake her?
What—what do you know about her?
You know something! Tell me!"
And he looked straight into my eyes.
Was he bluffing me, as he bluffed others?
"I know nothing," I declared, re-

turning his gaze. "That's a lie, Phil!" he said plain-ly, "You know something something about that woman." "You hate her? You told me so, Granny.'

"In confidente. Promise me never to repeat what I said concerning her," he begged in a strange harsh voice, with a curious look in his eyes. 'No, Phil, you are my friend—my best friend. Promise me that one thing!" CHAPTER VII.

DISSECTS A MAN'S HEART.

Graphy Gough's curious request that his denunciation of the fair Lydia should be kept a secret aroused within me increased suspicion.

Why was he, so feverishly anxious that none should know of his antagonism toward the woman save my-self?

What could it mean? mystery in his attitude. And yet when I came to reflect the woman dead at Redcliffe Gardens was certainly not the woman he had pointed out to me as the Roumanian whose presence in Bucharest had been found undesir-able by his excellency the Minister Soutzo! There was mystery—deep, un-fathomable.

fathomable.

I looked straight into the big, open face. About his lips was a nervousness quite unusual to him. He was keeping back from me something he wished to tell me. I felt sure.

For a long time he smoked on. I longed to ask him certain questions regarding that woman, sight of whom had filled him with such resentment. At last, in order to approach the subject, I asked:

to pay for them. I worked the trick of a bogus telegram or two from bankers and then I met the syndicate. I invited them to meeting—ten of them—in a private room at the hotel and heard what they had to say. The moment I set eyes on them I saw they would fall into my hands. They were little butchers and bakers and retired clerks—hard-headed, but without experience. They offered me a big share of the concession for building a casino, hotels, etc., and I said I would consider it.

As to the price, they were obdurate and put it in writing. That's just what I wanted. I got a copy of the concession and allowed them to go. The next day I invited them to meet

I took the paper, and looked at it, remarking that she must be getting

on well.

"Rather, my dear chap. She's as sharp as a needle, and she grows prettler every day. The good people keep her very nicely dressed, but of course they're well paid for it."

"Thanks to you, Granny," I remarked. "Her existence is one of your secrets. isn't it?"

secrets, isn't it?"
"Yes," he said in a low voice. "Nobody knows the real truth, only you, Phil. You recollect, no doubt, what I told you—how, late one winter's night, could speak begged me to let them off Others were inclined to be defiant."

"And you soon dealt with them, I suppose, Granny?"

"Dealt with them!" he cried. "Why, before I left that room I had the whole bag of tricks in my hands, syndicate, concessions—such as it was pinched, and so ill with rheumatism that the other. Her face was wan and pinched, and she wore a, dark gray synmiched, and she wore a poor shivering wonan, thinly clad, and so ill with rheumatism that the other. Her face was wan and pinched, and she wore a dark gray synmiched child. As I hurried past with the other. By the other. Her face was wan and pinched, and she wore a dark gray synmiched child. As I hurried past with the other. Her face was van and pinched, and she wore a dark gray synmiched back. Well—I didn't buy the matches, but I gave the woman a sovereign. She almost collapsed with thankfulness, for they were both starving. They had not tasted meat for a month, for she was a widow and too ill to work. And to cut a long story short, I gave the poor woman from time to time money to put her on her legs again. Two months went past, and she had already obtained work, and was again earning her living, when she was suddenly taken ill, and died before I knew of her seizure. Little Gertie was left alone—and so I adopted her and she is mine."

"A strange and pathetic meeting."

adopted her and she is mine."

"A strange and pathetic meeting."
I said, with a sigh. Surely no man would believe that at the bottom of Granville Gough's heart was such deep sympathy for the poor and afflicted. Had I not known the truth I myself should have scouted the idea. "You love the child, I know."

"Love her?" he echoed, turning in his chair. "She's all the world to me, Phil. I tell you that I always thank Providence for giving me the money I've invested for her. She will never want again."

want again.

want again."

"And while you are hard up like this she has every luxury!"

"What does it matter?" he laughed lightly. "I never think of the morrow for myself. Never have done it in all my life."

"You're too generous to your friends." I declared, recollecting the many openhanded actions which I had

met Carlier, the big banker of Lyons, quite accidentally. He's at the Savoywants me to go to America to do some business for him."

"Well, if it pays, go," I said.

He blew a cloud of smoke slowly from his lips and answered:

"The game he's on requires too much bluff, my dear boy, I'm not up to it just now."

"Because you're hipped. Granny, But things will come right for you. But things will come right for you. Roumania is not the only country in the world where concessions are to be picked up."

"She's a delightful little thing," I saked, knowing the child? I asked, knowing the child? I asked, knowing the child? I asked, knowing the strange, romantic story and how dear the little nine-year old girl was to his heart.

"She's bonnie, I went down to see her today. She's growing fast, and getting even prettier. By Jove! Phil I only wish I were not such a wanderer," he sighed. "Then I could see thought of. Why, the very men whom I've been able to tide over a crisis are those who have afterward been many openhanded actions which I had known him perfom.

"Well," he said "I'm fast coming to the conclusion, that the more one helps one's friends." I declared, recollecting the many openhanded actions which I had the worl in all my life."

"She's bonnie, I went down to see her today. She's growing fast, and getting even prettier. By Jove! Phil I only wish I were not such a wanderer," he sighed. "Then I could see the conclusion, that the more one helps one's friends." I declared, recollecting the many openhanded actions which I had known him perfom.

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"Well," he said "I'm fast coming to the conclusion, that the more one helps of the same here. "Well," he said "I'm fast coming to the conclusion to the co

might. Was she Lydia Popescu?"

He started forward, staring at me.
"Why?" he gasped. "What do you mean? Didn't I tell you she was?"
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Bridgeport, Connecticut, Administrator.

PROBATE COURT.

July 12, 1909.

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The Court of Probate for said district of Fairfield has limited and allowed a period of six months from the date hereof for the creditors of said estate to exhibit their claims for settlement.

All persons neglecting to present their accounts within said time allowed will be debarred a recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment to

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